

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 PA-02 H-02
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DRAFTED BY NEA/P:WBHARRIS:RGH
APPROVED BY NEA/P:REUNDELAND
PA/PRS - MR. CARTER
H - MR. FLATEN
SSM - MR. MC ANDREW
NEA/IAI - MR. KORN
NEA/ARN - MR. DRAPER
NEA/EGY - MR. MARTHINSEN
NEA/ARP - MR. TWINAM

-----079323 270026Z /64

O 262247Z JUL 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
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USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE
SECDEF WASHDC 0000

JCS WASHDC 0000
CIA WASHDC 0000
USICA WASHDC
NSC WASHDC 0000
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS POUCH

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CINCEUR FOR POLAD, TEL AVIV FOR PAO, DELIVER BY 9 A.M.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - JULY 26

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR JULY 26, 1978. FYI
ONLY, SPOKESMAN TODAY WAS HODDING CARTER III.

Q. IS THE ADMINISTRATION CONSIDERING APPOINTING A SPECIAL
MEDIATOR FOR THE MIDDLE EAST? OR DOES THE SECRETARY
INTEND TO MAKE ALL THESE TRIPS HIMSELF? OR IS MR.
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ATHERTON NO LONGER THE SPECIAL MEDIATOR FOR THE MIDDLE
EAST?

A. MR. ATHERTON IS THE SPECIAL AMBASSADOR FOR THE MIDDLE
EAST AND IS PERFORMING THAT FUNCTION. WE EXPECT HIM TO
CONTINUE PERFORMING THAT FUNCTION. SECRETARY VANCE IS
GOING TO THE MIDDLE EAST, AS ANNOUNCED, AND WILL BE
PERFORMING THE FUNCTION OF SECRETARY OF STATE. WE HAVE NO
PLANS FOR REPLACING EITHER ONE OF THEM.

Q. DO YOU HAVE PLANS FOR SUPPLEMENTING THE STRONG FORCE
WITH A SPECIAL MEDIATOR?

A. WE HAVE NO PLANS FOR REPLACING THESE TWO PEOPLE OR
SUPPLEMENTING THEM.

Q. THEN YOU DENY FLATLY THAT STORY WHICH APPEARED LAST
NIGHT?

A. I CAN SAY EXACTLY WHAT I AM SAYING.

Q. THERE IS A STORY SAYING THAT FOREIGN MINISTER DAYAN
GAVE THE SECRETARY OF STATE A PIECE OF PAPER WITH A NEW
ISRAELI POSITION ABOUT THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE WEST BANK
AND THE GAZA STRIP.

A. THE POSITION WHICH FOREIGN MINISTER DAYAN SPELLED

OUT IN HIS SPEECH BEFORE THE KNESSET ON MONDAY HAD BEEN DISCUSSED WITH SECRETARY VANCE AT LEEDS CASTLE AND IS A PART OF THE RECORD OF THOSE MEETINGS -- I.E., BETWEEN THE TWO OF THEM. I WANT TO EMPHASIZE THAT.

WE HAVE APPRECIATED THE EFFORTS OF THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT, BOTH AT LEEDS AND THEREAFTER, TO SEARCH FOR SOLUTIONS TO THE KEY PROBLEMS THAT MUST BE RESOLVED IF THE NEGOTIATIONS ARE TO SUCCEED.

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TO GO BACK TO THE FIRST QUESTION OF THIS BRIEFING, AS YOU KNOW, AMBASSADOR ATHERTON IS NOW IN ISRAEL WHERE HE IS DISCUSSING WITH ISRAELI LEADERS THEIR VIEWS ON THIS AND OTHER ISSUES. AND TO REPEAT MYSELF FROM THE LAST COUPLE OF DAYS, I CANT GO INTO THE DISCUSSION OF THE SPECIFICS OF WHAT ANY OF THE PARTIES ARE SAYING ON SPECIFIC MATTERS.

Q. WHEN YOU FIRST GOT THE RESPONSE TO THE QUESTIONS WHICH HAD BEEN PUT TO PRIME MINISTER BEGIN AND FOREIGN MINISTER DAYAN, YOU SAID YOU WERE DISAPPOINTED. I WOULD TAKE IT THAT BASED ON WHAT HAS APPEARED IN THE PUBLIC RECORD THAT YOU NO LONGER HAVE A BASIS FOR DISAPPOINTMENT.

A. I THINK WHAT I HAVE A BASIS FOR IS A STATEMENT OF APPRECIATION FOR THE EFFORTS THAT WERE MADE AT LEEDS AND THEREAFTER IN THIS SEARCH FOR SOLUTIONS. I CANT GO BACK AGAIN TO THE CONDITIONS THAT EXISTED AT THE TIME IN WHICH WE EXPRESSED OUR DISAPPOINTMENT, AS WE DID ABOUT THE ANSWERS TO THOSE TWO QUESTIONS. I AM SPEAKING ABOUT THE SITUATION THAT IS ON THE GROUND RIGHT NOW.

Q. THEN THE EFFORT THAT IS BEING MADE RATHER THAN THE RESULTS THAT HAVE COME FROM THAT EFFORT SO FAR -- IS THERE A DISTINCTION HERE?

A. YOU HAVE TO MAKE A DISTINCTION IN THAT WE DONT HAVE RESULTS UNTIL WE GET THE PARTIES BACK NEGOTIATING AGAIN. THAT IS THE RESULT TO WHICH WE ARE LOOKING.

I WOULD SAY, HOWEVER, THAT IN NOTING THE APPRECIATION OF
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THESE EFFORTS, THE APPRECIATION IS BECAUSE OF WHAT THEY CAN LEAD TO IN THE SEARCH FOR SOLUTIONS TO THE KEY PROBLEMS THAT DO EXIST. THAT, I THINK, SPEAKS FOR ITSELF. BUT I CANT SPEAK OF RESULTS UNTIL WE GET INTO THE NEGOTIATIONS.

Q. CAN YOU SAY THAT THE UNITED STATES BELIEVES THAT THERE IS A SHIFT IN THE ISRAELI POSITION AND THAT IS WHAT YOU ARE APPRECIATING, AND THAT IS WHAT IS PARTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE NEW MOVEMENT?

A. I AM NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO DO THAT. I AM NOT GOING TO HAVE TO NOTE OUR APPRECIATION FOR THE EFFORTS; I AM NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO GO BEYOND THAT.

Q. WELL, DO YOU THINK THAT THE ISRAELI POSITION IS THE SAME AS IT HAS BEEN OVER THE LAST TWO MONTHS.

A. I THINK THAT THE ISRAELI POSITION IS BEING FULLY EXPLORED RIGHT NOW BY MR. ATHERTON IN A PROCESS WHICH WE HAVE INITIATED AND TO WHICH THE ISRAELIS AND THE EGYPTIANS HAVE AGREED. I DON'T THINK THAT ANYTHING IS SERVED BY TRYING TO READ SECONDHAND WHAT IT IS THEY PRESENTED.

Q. AREN'T YOU APPRECIATING THEIR EFFORTS TO REEVALUATE THEIR POSITION, OR TO THEIR HAVING COME TO A NEW POSITION? I SENSE THE FORMER.

A. THEIR EFFORTS TO SEARCH FOR SOLUTIONS TO THE KEY PROBLEMS.

Q. BY EGYPTIAN TERMS, AND I SUPPOSE BY AMERICAN TERMS, THEY WEREN'T MAKING A TERRIFIC EFFORT BECAUSE THEY WEREN'T REEVALUATING THEIR POSITION. THIS IS PROBABLY THE FIRST PHRASE I REMEMBER COMING FROM THIS PODIUM FOR THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT IN GOD KNOWS HOW LONG, SO THEN THEY UNCLASSIFIED

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HAVE DONE SOMETHING THAT MAKES YOU HAPPY. WHAT IS IT?

A. I KNOW YOU HAVE THE CALENDAR LIST, AND YOU KNOW THAT AT THE TIME OF THE ORIGINAL PROPOSALS WE DID, IN FACT, SAY THAT THEY WERE THE BASIS FOR NEGOTIATION. THEN WE ASKED FOR THE TWO ANSWERS, AND WE STRESSED OUR DISAPPOINTMENT IN IT.

WE NOW HAVE A NEW SET OF EVENTS. IT HAPPENS THAT PEOPLE DO REACT TO EVENTS AND NOT TO THE REQUESTS OF THE REPORTERS WHO ARE REACTING TO NON-EVENTS, AND I AM REACTING TO A SET OF EVENTS IN TELLING YOU THAT WE, AT THIS POINT, DO APPRECIATE THE EFFORTS THAT WERE PUT FORWARD AT LEEDS AND SUBSEQUENTLY BY THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT TO TRY TO FIND SOLUTIONS. AND THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT I AM SAYING.

Q. AS I RECALL, THE SECRETARY SAID AFTER THE LEEDS MEETING THAT THERE WAS NO PROGRESS IN THE USUAL SENSE OF THAT

WORD.

A. YES, HE SAID TWO THINGS. HE SAID, NOT PROGRESS ON THE ROOT ISSUES, BUT CERTAINLY PROGRESS IN THE SENSE OF THE WAY THEY WERE DEALING WITH EACH OTHER.

Q. WELL, IF THE POSITION THAT DAYAN HAS ARTICULATED PUBLICLY IS THE SAME ONE THAT HE PRESENTED TO THE SECRETARY, DOES THAT MEAN THAT THE SECRETARY WOULD NOT REGARD THAT AS PROGRESS IN THE SENSE OF IT MOVING CLOSER TO THE POSITION OF THE OTHER SIDE?

A. I THINK THE PROBLEM WITH TRYING TO SPECIFY PROGRESS ON THE ROOT ISSUES IS THAT IT'S PREMATURE TO ANNOUNCE UNCLASSIFIED

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IT UNTIL THERE IS AN AGREEMENT. I THINK BOTH SETS OF PARTIES HAVE SAID FOR THEMSELVES THAT ON THOSE ISSUES THEY FOUND THEMSELVES STILL TO BE PRETTY DIAMETRICALLY APART. I DON'T WANT TO TRY TO GILD THAT LILY.

Q. YESTERDAY, YOU PROCLAIMED A SORT OF SILENCE ON EVENTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST. THE DAYAN POSITION WAS ANNOUNCED BEFORE YESTERDAY. AND TODAY YOU BREAK YOUR SILENCE AND HAVE A FEW WORDS OF MEAGER APPRECIATION. WHAT CAUSED THE CHANGE BETWEEN YESTERDAY AND TODAY?

A. CLOSER ANALYSIS.

Q. ARE THESE APPRECIATED EFFORTS IN RESPONSE TO AMERICAN ENTREATIES, OR ARE THEY IN RESPONSE TO THE EGYPTIAN EFFORTS?

A. I THINK THEY ARE IN RESPONSE TO THE BEST CONVICTIONS OF THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT.

Q. ARE THEY KIND OF SPONTANEOUS, OR DID YOU LEAN ON THEM A LITTLE?

A. WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "LEAN ON THEM A LITTLE?"

Q. SORT OF URGE THEM ALONG THE COURSE THAT YOU THOUGHT MIGHT LEAD TO A SETTLEMENT.

A. THE UNITED STATES HAS MADE ITS POSITION CLEAR ON THIS ISSUE.

Q. THESE APPRECIATED EFFORTS -- ARE THEY IN RESPONSE TO NEW IDEAS PUT FORWARD BY THE UNITED STATES?

A. NO. I WANT TO MAKE THAT CLEAR AGAIN. WE HAVE NOT

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PUT FORWARD ANY NEW IDEAS. THE ONLY IDEAS THAT WE HAVE ON THE TABLE ARE THE ONES YOU HAVE HEARD US EXPRESS.

Q. COULD WE TRY TO DEAL A LITTLE MORE SERIOUSLY WITH THIS QUESTION ABOUT WHAT HAS CHANGED SINCE MONDAY, RATHER THAN JUST SAYING FURTHER ANALYSIS? WAS THERE IN FACT A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE MONDAY STATEMENT IN THE KNESSET AND THE INFORMATION WHICH WAS PASSED OUT IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY IN ISRAEL YESTERDAY WHICH PERHAPS CHANGES YOUR OPINION?

A. TO BE PERFECTLY HONEST, WHEN I SAY ANALYSIS, I THINK IT IS THE ACCUMULATION OF INFORMATION WHICH WE HAVE HAD OVER SOME DAYS AND THE CUMULATIVE IMPACT OF IT.

Q. THE QUESTION SPECIFICALLY REFERRED TO WHAT HAD BEEN SAID IN THE KNESSET ON MONDAY. YOU IMPLIED THAT IT WAS SIMPLY AN ANALYSIS OF MONDAY'S STATEMENT, WITHOUT ADDING ANYTHING THAT MIGHT HAVE HAPPENED ON TUESDAY.

A. NO. THAT WAS OBVIOUSLY A SHORTHAND WAY OF TRYING TO STOP HAVING TO REPUDIATE THE FACT THAT I WASN'T GOING TO SPEAK ANY MORE ON THE SUBJECT. BUT, IN FACT, THERE HAS BEEN A SUCCESSION OF STORIES AND REPORTING. ALL OF WHICH WE HAVE BEEN LOOKING AT.

Q. YOU KNEW ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT SINCE JULY 18 IN LEEDS. IT IS NOTHING NEW FOR YOU. FOR THE UNITED STATES IS IT NOTHING THAT HAPPENED ON MONDAY OR YESTERDAY IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE IN ISRAEL.

A. LET ME JUST SUGGEST TO YOU THAT A NUMBER OF THINGS
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ARE SAID AND OFFERED IN VARIOUS FORMS OF FORMALITY AND IN VARIOUS STAGES OF BEING OFFICIAL, UNOFFICIAL, PAPERS, NON-PAPERS, AND THE LIKE. THE DEVELOPMENT OF POSITIONS PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY IS NOT QUITE AS SIMPLE AS YOU MAKE

IT OUT TO BE; THE PERCEPTION OF WHAT IS INTENDED IS NOT AS SIMPLE AS YOU MAKE IT OUT TO BE.

Q. HOW MORE OFFICIAL CAN YOU BE THAN A PIECE OF OFFICIAL PAPER GIVEN BY ONE FOREIGN MINISTER TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE?

A. I AM GOING TO STOP WITH WHAT I HAVE SAID.

Q. ARE YOU AWARE OF ANY MOVEMENT TOWARDS A MEETING BETWEEN BEGIN AND SADAT THAT MIGHT TAKE PLACE IN CAIRO?

A. NO. I HAVE SEEN PRESS REPORTS. I HAVE NOT SEEN ANY KIND OF OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION OF SUCH A THING. I AM UNAWARE OF IT IN ANY CAPACITY OTHER THAN THE ONE YOU ARE AWARE OF IT -- THAT IS, AS A READER OR VIEWER.

Q. THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT'S VIEW, I ASSUME BEING ONE OF URGING CONTACTS BETWEEN THE PARTIES, WOULD NO DOUBT WELCOME THIS KIND OF A MEETING?

A. I HAVE NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT WE WOULD BE ANYTHING BUT HAPPY TO SEE DIRECT CONTACTS AT EVERY LEVEL.

Q. SHOULD ROY ATHERTON BE GIVEN SOME CREDIT FOR THIS APPARENT NON-SHIFT?

A. I THINK HE JUST ARRIVED THERE, AND I THINK I AM COMMENTING ON EVENTS OF SOME DAYS. BUT ROY ATHERTON HAS BEEN WORKING ON THIS PROBLEM FOR YEARS. IN THE LARGER SENSE, I WOULD GIVE HIM A LOT OF CREDIT FOR A NUMBER OF UNCLASSIFIED

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THINGS THAT HAVE HAPPENED.

Q. HAVE YOU HEARD ANYTHING LATELY FROM EGYPT THAT RAISES THE EXPECTATION OF A FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING TO A CERTAINTY?

A. I THINK I'M GOING TO HAVE TO STAY WITH THE WORD EXPECTATION.

Q. DO YOU CARE TO COMMENT ON WHETHER EGYPT IS MAKING THE KIND OF EFFORTS THAT YOU APPRECIATE?

A. I DONT HAVE ANY COMMENT WHATSOEVER. I DONT EXPECT TO BE MAKING COMMENTS PRECEDING THE CONVENING OF THE TRIP-- UNTIL I MAKE ANOTHER.

Q. BESIDES THE STATEMENT ON LEBANON, DID YOU ALSO ENGAGE IN DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS?

A. YES.

Q. WITH WHOM?

A. I DONT THINK I'M GOING TO BE ABLE TO ITEMIZE ALL THE PARTIES. BUT TO REPEAT, WE ARE CALLING FOR ALL OF THOSE WHO HAVE ANY INFLUENCE ON THE SITUATION TO DO EVERYTHING THEY CAN TO RESTORE A CEASE-FIRE SO THAT A

SOLUTION TO THE CAUSES OF THE FIGHTING CAN BE
NEGOTIATED. CHRISTOPHER

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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